

Message Text

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13

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03

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R 140940Z SEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TOKYO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6790

INFO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY JAKARTA

AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH

AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE

AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

AMEMBASSY BANGKOK

AMEMBASSY SAIGON

C O N F I D E N T I A L TOKYO 11934

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EGEN, PFOR, JA, AS, BM, NZ

SUBJ: ASIAN REGIONALISM: ANNUAL SEAMED MEETING

REF: A. TOKYO 7552; B. TOKYO 11550

SUMMARY: AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND WILL PARTICIPATE IN SEAMED FOR FIRST TIME THIS YEAR. GOJ STILL AWAITING FORMAL REPLY FROM BURMA TO INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE, BUT ANTICIPATES GUB WILL ATTEND. GOJ DOES NOT EXPECT GOA AND GNZ PARTICIPATION TO CHANGE CHARACTER OF SEAMED IN NEAR TERM FROM THAT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT BODY ESCHEWING POLITICAL QUESTIONS, AND DOES NOT WISH SUCH CHANGE TO TAKE PLACE. GOJ UNDERSTANDS POSSIBILITY THAT OVER LONGER TERM SUCH CHANGE MAY OCCUR. END SUMMARY.

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IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF SEPT 12 KAWAMURA, HEAD, INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION DIVISION, ECONOMIC COOPERATION BUREAU, FONOFF, PROVIDED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION CONCERNING THE EIGHTH MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF SOUTHEAST ASIA (SEAMED), SCHEDULED TO BE HELD OCT 11 TO 13 IN TOKYO:

A. MEMBERSHIP OF AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND IS FIRST ITEM ON MINISTERS' AGENDA, AND GOJ EXPECTS THAT THEIR PARTICIPATION WILL BE UNANIMOUSLY APPROVED.

B. GOJ UNDERSTANDS FROM GOJ EMBASSY RANGOON THAT GUB WISHES TO PARTICIPATE (FOR FIRST TIME) IN SEAMED THIS YEAR, AND IT HAS EXTENDED OFFICIAL INVITATION. GUB HAS NOT YET OFFICIALLY RESPONDED TO INVITATION

C. AGENDA THIS YEAR'S MEETING WILL BE SIMILAR TO THAT OF PREVIOUS YEARS, CONSISTING OF (1) REMARKS BY LDC. MINISTERS CONCERNING PROGRESS AND PROBLEMS OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN THEIR RESPECTIVE COUNTRIES, (2) EXPLANATION BY JAPAN (AND PRESUMABLY AUSTRALIA AND NEW ZEALAND) OF ECONOMIC COOPERATION ACTIVITIES, EMPHASIZING THOSE DIRECTED TOWARDS SOUTHEAST ASIAN COUNTRIES, AND (3) REPORTS ON PROJECTS BEING UNDERTAKEN UNDER SEAMED AEGIS. PROCEDURAL CHANGE WILL OCCUR IN THAT SUB-MINISTERIAL OFFICIALS WILL REVIEW REGIONAL PROJECTS ON FIRST DAY, AND MINISTERS WILL DISCUSS MORE GENERAL QUESTIONS ON SECOND AND THIRD DAYS.

D. IN TERMS OF CONCRETE ACCOMPLISHMENTS, GOJ EXPECTS THAT DRAFT AGREEMENT ON NEW PROJECT, SOUTHEAST ASIA MEDICAL AND HEALTH ORGANIZATION, WHICH HAS BEEN UNDER DISCUSSION FOR SOME YEARS, WILL BE APPROVED AT MEETING. ANOTHER MATTER LIKELY TO BE DISCUSSED IS ESTABLISHMENT OF PERMANENT SECRETARIAT FOR SEAMED. OUTCOME OF THAT DISCUSSION IS UNCERTAIN.

E. GOJ FEELS THAT REASON FOR SEAMED'S SURVIVAL HAS BEEN ITS CONCENTRATION ON DEVELOPMENT QUESTIONS AND AVOIDANCE OF POLITICAL ONES. GOJ WOULD NOT LIKE TO SEE ORGAN-
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IZATION CHANGE FROM ECONOMIC TO POLITICAL IN NATURE, AND OTHER MEMBER COUNTRIES AGREE. IN EXPRESSING INTEREST IN JOINING SEAMED, GOA CONFIRMED THAT SEAMED'S ORIENTATION NEED NOT BE CHANGED, AND MEMBERS AGREED TO AUSTRALIA'S PARTICIPATION ON THIS UNDERSTANDING. GNZ DID NOT SAY DIRECTLY THAT IT SHARED THIS VIEW, BUT IT HAS INDICATED WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE IN DEVELOPMENT MATTERS AND IS AWARE THAT SEAMED

IS FORUM FOR DISCUSSION OF DEVELOPMENT MATTERS. GOJ KNOWS
THAT BOTH GOA AND GNZ ARE INTERESTED IN BROAD BASED REGION-
AL POLITICAL ORGANIZATION AND BELIEVES THEY ARE INTERESTED
IN PARTICIPATION IN SEAMED AS FIRST STEP IN DIRECTION
FORMATION OF POLITICAL ORGANIZATION. WITHIN FONOFF ITSELF
DIFFERENCE OF OPINION EXISTS AS TO FUTURE OF SEAMED.
ONE VIEW SUPPORTS ITS CONTINUATION ALONG PRESENT LINES;
OTHER VIEW IS THAT IF MAJORITY OF MEMBERS FAVORS CHANGE,
GOJ HAS NO ALTERNATIVE BUT TO GO ALONG.
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